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CHAPTER XIX.

Mr. Coventry, relieved of a great and

immediate anxiety, could now turn his

whole attention to Grace Carden; and

she puzzled him. He expected to see

her come down to him, smiling and

satisfied at the great event of last night.

Instead of that, she appeared late, with

cheeks rather pale, and signs of trouble

under her fair eyes.

As the day went on, she showed

positive distress of mind; irritable and

dejected by turns, and quite unable to

settle to anything.

Mr. Coventry, with all his skill, was

quite at fault. He could understand

her being in anxiety for news about

Little; but why not relieve her anxiety

by sending a servant to inquire? Above

all, why this irritation? This positive

suffering?

A mystery to him, there was no reason

why it should be one to his readers.

Grace Carden, for the first time in her

life, was in the clutches of a fiend, a

tormenting devil, called jealousy.

The thought that another woman was

nursing Henry Little all this time

distracted her. It would have been such

a heaven to her to tend him, after those

cruel men had hurt him so; but that

pure joy was given to another, and that

other loved him, and could indulge

her in her love. How it hurt her!

She had heard Henry open his eyes to

his love, and advised him to reward it.

And now she could do nothing to

defend herself. This very important

in Henry's circumstances held her

back. She could not write to him and

say, 'Now I know you are Mr. Baby's

nephew, that makes all the difference,'

that would only give him fresh offence,

and misrepresent herself; for in truth

she had repented her letter before the

relationship was discovered.

No! all she could do was to wait till

Jael came, and then charge

her with some subtle message, that

might make Henry Little pause, if he

ever loved her.

She detected Coventry watching her.

She fled directly to her own room, and

there sat on thorns, waiting for her rival

to come and give her an opportunity.

But afternoon came, and no Jael;

evening came, and no Jael.

'Ah! I thought Grace, bitterly, 'she

is better employed than to come near me.

She is not a self-sacrificing girl like

me. When I had the advantage, I gave

it up; now she has got it, she uses it

without mercy, decency or gratitude.

And that is the way to love. Oh! if my

turn came, and she came again! But it

never will!

Having arrived at this conclusion,

she lay on the couch in her own room,

and was thoroughly miserable.

She came down to dinner, and man-

aged to take a share in the conversation,

but was very languid; and Coventry

detected that she had been crying.

After dinner, Knight broomed in a

verbal message from Jael to Mr. Baby,

to the effect that the young gentleman

was still and sore, and she had sent

into Hillsborough for Dr. Ambrose.

'Quite right of her,' said the Squire.

'You needn't look so alarmed, Grace;

there are no bones broken; and he is in

capital hands; he couldn't have a tender

nurse than this great strong

man, nor a better doctor than my friend

and mania Ambrose.'

Next morning, soon after breakfast,

Riley addressed his words to the following

'I was obliged to go into Hillsborough

yesterday, and postpone the paraffination

of that sacred building. But I set

a watch on it; and this day I devote to

a pious purpose. I'm going to up-braid

the church of my forefathers; and you

can come with me, if you choose? This

invitation, however, was given in a

somewhat gloomy, and so little

that Coventry, courtier-like, said in

reply, he felt it would be a painful

sight to his host, and the fewer witnesses

the better. Jael, nodding assent and

seemed pleased. 'Not so Mr. Carden,'

said: 'If that is your feeling, you had

better stay at home. I shall go. I

have something to tell Mr. Baby when

we get there, and I'm vain enough to

think that it will make him not quite

so angry about the poor dear old

church.'

'Then come by all means,' said

Baby; 'for I'm angry enough at

present.'

Before they got half way to the church

they were hailed from behind; and

turning round, saw the long figure

of Dr. Ambrose coming after them.

They waited for him and he came up

with them. He had heard the whole

business from Riley; and he was warm

in the praises of his patient.

To a dry inquiry from Baby, whether

he approved of his patient deprecating

a church, he said, with a delicious cool-

ness, he thought that there was not

much harm in that, the church not

being used for divine service.

At this, Baby uttered an inarticulate

but savage growl, and (grace, to wit,

a hot discussion, begged the Doctor not

to go into that question, but to tell her

how Mr. Little was.

'Oh, he is recovered some severe con-

tusions, but there is nothing serious.

He is in good hands, I assure you. I

met him out walking with his nurse;

and I must say I never saw a hand-

some couple. He is dark, she is fair.

She is like the ancient statues of Venus,

massive and grand, but not clumsy;

he is lean and snappy, as a man ought

to be.'

'Oh, Doctor, this from you!' said

Grace with undignified spite.

'Well, it was a concession. He was

looking on her shoulder, and her face

and downcast eyes were turned to

him so sweetly-said I to myself-

Hum!'

'What!' said Baby. 'Would you marry

him to a young lady?'

'No! I'd let him marry who he likes;

only, having seen my wife and his nurse

together, it struck me that between

two such fine girls, the choice of the

same girl would be a matter of some

age, the tender relation of patient and

nurse, sanctioned, as I hear it is, by a

benevolent uncle.'

'Confound your impudence!' said

Baby. 'I would hardly top there. What

do you think, Miss Carden?'

'I'll tell you, if you will promise, on

your honor, never to repeat what I

say.'

And she slackened her pace, and

lingered behind Mr. Baby.

'He promised her.'

'Then,' she whispered in his ear, 'I

HATE YOU!'

And her eyes flashed blue fire at him,

and startled him.

Then she darted forward, and took

Mr. Baby with a scolding face,

and a piteous deprecating glance she

back at the sagacious personage she

had defied.</